

## EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

*At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 3 December 2009 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building*

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chairman) and Nelson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Harris

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Ferguson, R. Dart, B. Dodd, A. McNamara and P. Searing

Also in attendance: None

### ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE

		<i>Action</i>
ES40	MINUTES  The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 <sup>th</sup> November 2009 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.  <b>CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO</b>	
ES41	DISCRETIONARY NON DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF  The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy requesting members to consider two applications for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.  The report advised that under the provisions of Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Authority was allowed to grant discretionary rate relief to organisations that were either a charity or a non-profit making organisation.  RESOLVED: That  (1) under the provisions of Section 47, the Local Government Finance Act 1988, discretionary rate relief be granted to the following organisation at the percentage	Strategic Director Corporate and Policy

indicated, for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 or the commencement of liability, whichever is the later, to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013:

Halton Access to Media	100%
Halton YMCA Limited	20%

#### ES42 2009-10 HALF YEAR SPENDING

The Sub-Committee considered a report which summarised the overall revenue and capital spending position as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

In overall terms, revenue expenditure was below the budget profile. However, this was only a guide to eventual spending. It was noted that spending on employees was also below the budget profile which was primarily due to the delay in settling the 2009 Pay Award. The Budget included 2.5% for the pay award, which had now been settled at just over 1% in total and the new rates were paid in October along with the arrears of pay. As a result, budgets would be revised to reflect the actual pay award. However, this would be partly offset by the additional 0.3% awarded in respect of the 2008 Pay Award following arbitration, which was 0.25% higher than budget.

Following the Pay and Grading Review appeals for the Health and Community Directorate have been completed resulting in a total additional cost in the year £280,000. This comprised £141,000 relating to one off back pay costs which had been met from reserves and £139,000 for on-going additional annual costs which would need to be contained within existing Directorate budgets. In addition, it was noted that electricity costs were expected to be below budget following the commencement of a new contract in October 2009.

With regard to income, this was currently below budget profile in a number of areas, some of which may be reflected by the economic downturn and, at this stage, appeared likely to be below budget by year end. It was expected that the shortfalls would continue into next year. At this stage, it did not appear that the shortfalls in income were having an adverse effect upon the Council's overall net budget. However, this would be due to delays in spending and would need to be kept under close scrutiny by Directorates during the second half of the year.

In respect of capital spending, it was noted that spending to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009 totalled £10.7m which was

69% of the planned spending of £15.4m at this stage. However, this only represented 29% of the total capital programme of £37.5m (which assumes a 20% slippage between years). The main areas of programme slippage to date were in respect of Mersey Gateway advance land acquisition and Bridge maintenance.

Although historically capital expenditure was significantly higher in the latter part of the financial year, it was important that project managers maintained pressure to keep projects and spending on schedule and, in particular, to ensure that all external funding was maximised.

It was also noted that the Council's balance sheet was monitored regularly in accordance with the Reserves and Balances Strategy which formed part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The key reserves and balances had been reviewed and were considered prudent and appropriate at this stage in the financial year.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be noted;

(2) budget managers continue to closely monitor and control spending and income levels, to ensure that overall spending remained in line with budget by year end.

ES43 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public

interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information will be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

## **COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO**

### **ES44 AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF A DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE**

The Sub-Committee considered a report regarding the tendering process for the provision of Domestic Abuse Services in Halton.

In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders in relation to procurement, expressions of interest were invited through adverts in various publications. As a result, 25 provider organisations expressed an interest and were sent a pre-qualification questionnaire.

Following evaluation of the questionnaires 13 Invitation to Tender documents were sent out, of which nine tenders were submitted by the deadline of 24<sup>th</sup> July 2009. All the tenders received were evaluated on price and quality. Following this evaluation process three provider organisations were invited to deliver presentations. As a result, Halton and District Women's Aid received the highest score, they submitted the lowest tender price and were of the highest quality.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee agree the award of the Contract in the sum of £227,594 and a budget of £35,460 for the Sanctuary Scheme (parts and labour) for the whole life of a 2.4 year contract to Halton and District Women's Aid for the provision of Domestic Abuse Services, subject to approval of the 2010/2011 budget.

Strategic Director  
Health and  
Community

## **CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

### **ES45 MANAGEMENT OF MOOR LANE AND WATERLOO BUSINESS GENERATION CENTRES**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which sought approval to revert the management of Moor Lane and Waterloo Business Centres from Halton Chamber of Commerce to the Council. The Waterloo Centre was to be closed on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 to facilitate the construction of the new bridge. The Centre currently had 75% occupancy rate. However, this would reduce in the coming months due to the Mersey Gateway requirement. The Mersey Gateway Team was currently giving support to the remaining businesses to find them new accommodation which would hasten the closure of Waterloo Centre.

It was noted that if this course of action was taken this would have an implication for the Chamber and their staff and would probably mean the transfer of one or more members of staff into the Council under the TUPE Regulations.

The current cost for management fees and the handyman were in the order of £49,000 per annum. It was anticipated that any additional costs to the Council would be covered by no longer paying the £49,000 fee to the Chamber.

**RESOLVED:** That the Sub Committee approve the following subject to there being no additional cost to the Council:

(1) the Council terminates the contract with the Chamber of Commerce for the management of the two business centres;

(2) three months' Notice of Termination be given to the Chamber of Commerce, in accordance with the contract; and

(3) the Corporate Services portfolio holder be kept up to date on developments

**MINUTES ISSUED: 7<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

**CALL IN: 15<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may**

Strategic Director  
Corporate  
Services

**be called in no later than 15<sup>th</sup> December 2009.**

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*Meeting ended at 10.36 a.m.*